

## Public Health Service Announces New Program For Accident Prevention

**T**HE NEW Accident Prevention Program of the Public Health Service, created July 1, 1956, is located in the Division of Special Health Services, Bureau of State Services. The program is directed by James L. Goddard, M.D. Chief of Program Services is Eugene L. Lehr, a sanitary engineer; chief nursing consultant is Jean F. Williams; and Albert P. Iskrant, a statistician, is chief of Operational Research.

Designed to serve State and local health departments through research, consultation, training, and information, the new program will devote much of the current year to planning in preparation for a considerably expanded operation in fiscal year 1958. In addition to its own staff, the program will use the services of personnel assigned by other interested agencies in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. A Departmental Advisory Accident Prevention Committee will help coordinate Departmental activities in the field.

Broadening the scope of the former home accident prevention program in the Bureau of State Services, the new program will, through use of the epidemiological approach, concern itself with the basic factors in accident causation and prevention and will enlist the competencies of all the disciplines in public health. The program will also assume responsibility for the former interests and activities of the Division of Sanitary Engineering Services in the hygiene of housing. Special attention will be directed toward developing guidelines and standards for incorporating basic safety and hygienic features into housing structures, including homes for special occupancy.

The accident category constituted the fourth leading cause of death in this country in 1955, and was actually the first cause of death for the age group 1-34 years. More than 90,000 persons died from accidents in 1955. More than 9,000,000 injuries are estimated to occur each year, causing more than 300,000 permanent impairments.

Since accidents are the result of forces from three sources—the host, the agent, and the environment—the public health procedure of epidemiological analysis, determination of causes, development of preventive measures, and evaluation may be applied in studies for preventing them.

Specialists from every field, including that of human behavior, can be used in the studies of the interrelationship of the forces and multiple causes that lead to accidental injury or death.

A 7-point work program has been set up as follows:

1. Collection and analysis of data.
2. Training (inservice, assignment, and formal).
3. Educational and informational services.
4. Experimental studies and epidemiological investigations.
5. Program demonstrations.
6. Consultation to official and voluntary agencies.
7. Aid to health departments in evaluating and setting up statistical procedures.

Other Departmental agencies cooperating with the new Accident Prevention Program are the Children's Bureau, Food and Drug Administration, Office of Education, and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Within the Public Health Service, the Bureau of Medical Services, the National Institutes of Health, the Division of Public Health Methods, and the National Office of Vital Statistics are all active in the work of the program.